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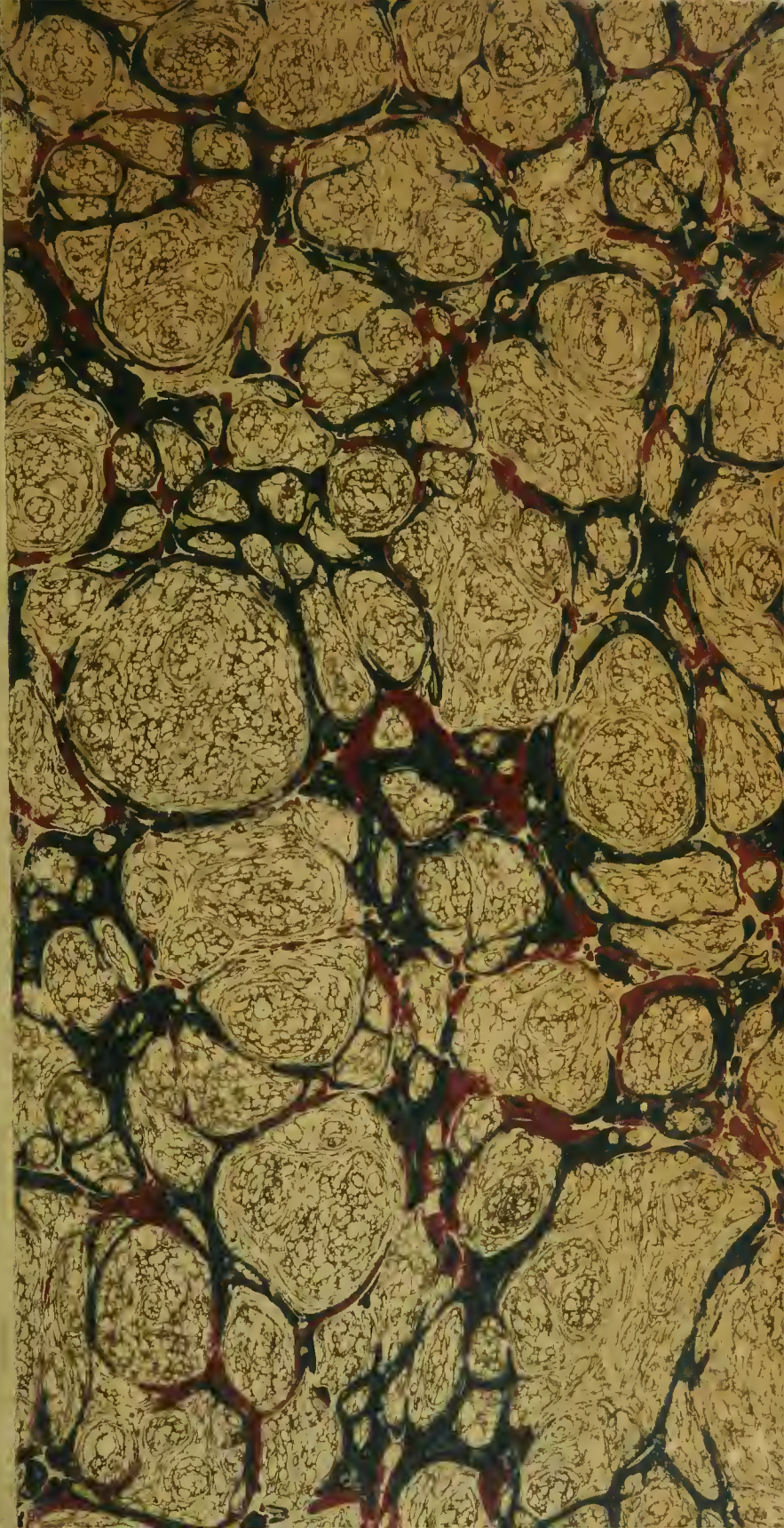

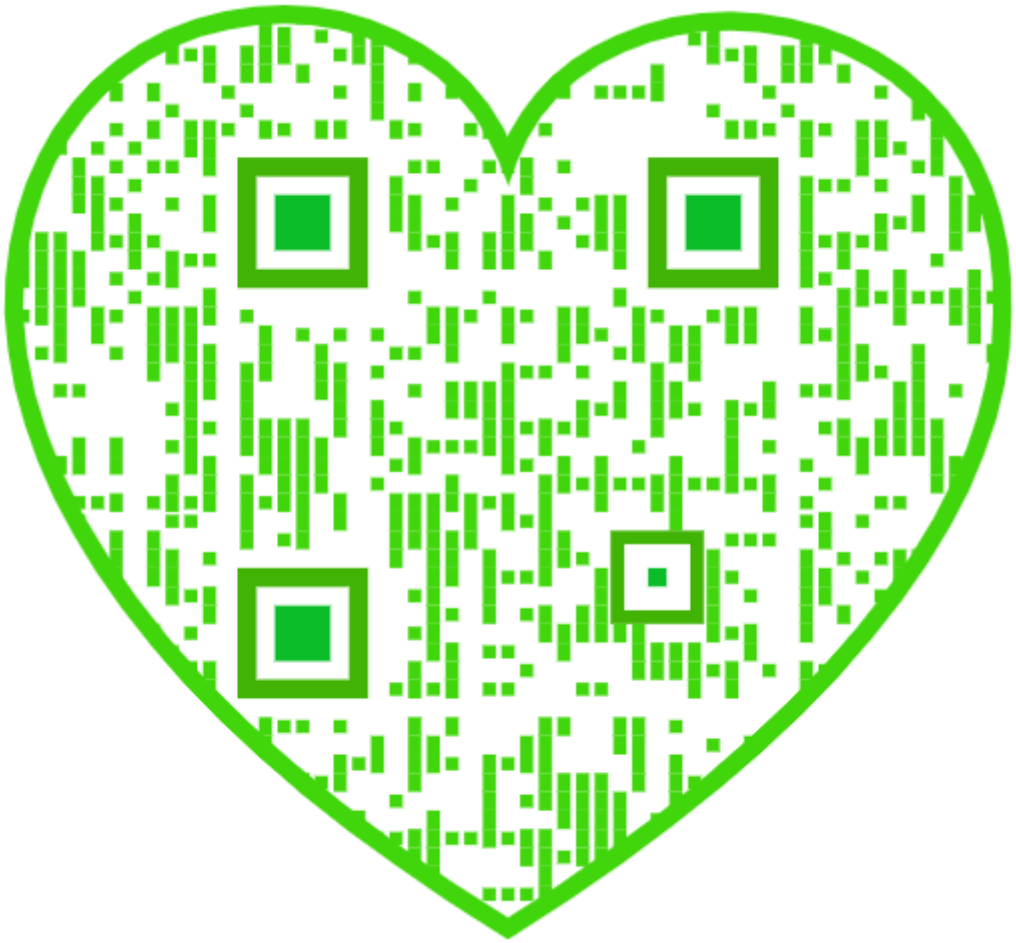

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THE FEATHER'S WYANDOTTE BOOK

By T. F. McGREW

The Feather's Wyandotte Book

By T. F. McGREW

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CONTENTS

By T. F. McGrew.

Origin and History of the Silver Variety as given by Mr. Joseph Wallace. 5

The Advanced Type of Wyandotte. 15

Our Standard Demands Since 1883. 21

Silver Laced Wyandottes. 25

White and Black Wyandottes. 37

Buff Wyandottes. 50

The Any-Other Variety. Golden and Silver Penciled, Buff Laced, Violet and Cuckoo Wyandottes. 55

CHAPTER I.

WYANDOTTES.

Origin and History of the Silver Variety as Given by Mr. Joseph Wallace.

As stated in the short introduction to this book, Mr. Joseph Wallace and myself were close friends for many years. One of the earlier works on the Wyandotte was written by Mr. I. K. Felch and Mr. Wallace, both of whom knew the history of the Silver variety from its early advent. I take the liberty of using Mr. Wallace's own words as to their origin, as recorded by him in his work on Wyandottes, published by the Ferris Publishing Co., of Albany, in 1891, by permission of Mr. Holmes.

"Much praise is due the fancier who improves and beautifies his flock, and much more is due the one who originates and gives to the world the creation of his skill and the result of his labors. It is to be regretted that we can not render the originator of Silver Wyandottes any testimony of praise and esteem, as his name is unknown to the poultry fraternity, and the grave refuses to disclose the identity of our great benefactor, who has left behind him the first fruits of his efforts, to be worked over by willing and loving hands, and, in the end, by judicious crossing and combining different elements together, evolving one of the most useful breeds known to poultrymen.

"The Silver Wyandotte is the result of composite crosses, varying widely in plumage and general characteristics. It has more elements of separate crosses than are found in other standard breeds; it combines

the useful and comely qualities of its predecessors; its size, type, unique plumage, flesh and egg-producing merits, meet the desires and approval of its fanciers and admirers, and it promises to eclipse other leading breeds in popular estimation. Much of the early history of the Silver Wyandotte is shrouded in mystery. Mr. I. K. Felch has contributed some early records of the breed to the poultry press, which go back twenty years or more. A Mr. John P. Ray, of Hemlock Lake, N. Y., was breeding Sebright Cochins with rose combs, between the years 1868-71. His fowl, as Mr. Ray expressed it, was from Sebright Bantam and 'Yellow Chitagong.' It seems that two other persons had been breeding the same, or nearly the same kind of fowl, as the following correspondence shows:

"'Hemlock Lake, N. Y.,

"'August 7, 1871.

"'Dear Sir: I was at Lima last week and saw some Sebright chickens that were hatched from eggs obtained from you.

"'I have a nice lot of the same breed, and wish to get two cocks to cross with my hens, as mine are all related. If you can spare those that are well marked, with double or rose combs, that will make good-sized cocks, you may send them to me. I am particular about the comb, as mine are rose combs and I do not wish to breed them single. Write me if you have them to spare and at what price. Yours truly, (signed)

"'John P. Ray.

"'Rev. Mr. Baker.'

"Endorsed on the back of this letter is the Rev. Mr. Baker's reply.

SILVER LACED WYANDOTTE MALE

"'Honeoye Falls, August 28, 1871.

"'J. P. Ray. Dear Sir: I have no fowls to sell. I think you could get two cocks of Rev. Mr. Benson if you would apply soon. Mr. Benson would probably want $1 each.

"'A. S. Baker.'

"Evidently single and rose combs appeared in the early Sebright Cochins, as the single comb has done in some broods since the Silver Wyandotte was admitted to the Standard. This feature appeared in two separate broods, which we reared seven years ago, and the eggs were purchased from two breeders in the State of New York. The birds with single combs were much lighter in plumage, and the lacing showed a very close resemblance to that of the Silver Spangled Hamburg.

"Thus we see that Messrs. Ray, Baker, and Benson were in possession of the foundation material of the Silver Wyandotte in 1871. The following year a cut of one of Mr. Ray's birds appeared in the Rural Home. The same and following year he sold some of his stock to Messrs. McMillan, Dudley, Whittaker, and Hull. The subsequent cross on this foundation blood was a Silver Spangled Hamburg and Dark Brahma. No pea-comb appeared until after the cross of 1876.

"After the Sebright Cochins had been bred some years by breeders in New York, Michigan, and probably in other States, Mr. Payne, of Binghamton, N. Y., advertised his fowls in the Poultry World in 1874-75. In 1876 this breed was presented to the American Poultry Association, at Buffalo, for admission to the Standard under the name American Sebrights. This type was from a cross of the Silver

Spangled Hamburg and Buff Cochin. It was conceded that this fowl was much superior in type, beauty, and usefulness to the Sebright Cochins, while other parties had been at work to obviate the faults of the latter, as the lacing was too light and too indistinct to merit being called laced. Single combs appeared with rose-combs, feathered with smooth legs, bluish-white with red ear-lobes, and blue with yellow legs. It is said that a black fowl of the Breda breed was introduced in the crossing to enrich and give permanency to the lacing, and the two productions being crossed, formed the American Sebrights.

"On the presentation of the American Sebrights, the American Poultry Association acknowledged the promising merits of the new breed, but objected to the name on the ground that it was suggestive of bantam. They knew, too, that several types of the new breed were being cultivated, and that the admirers of each were desirous of giving new names. A new cross of Silver Spangled Hamburg and Dark Brahma now appeared, and it was much in advance of the other crosses in type and desirable qualities, although it possessed a pea-comb. One party earnestly advocated single combs. Mr. Whittaker was in favor of rose-combs, and Mr. Kidder strongly pressed the advantages of a pea-comb. The petition was so far considered that Mr. Payne was appointed chairman of the committee to settle on a name and standard for the breed; but the committee failed to make a report and the American Sebright had to wait till 1883.

"Happily the delay prompted improvement, and the product of the Hamburg and Dark Brahma, with the best of the other crosses, evolved a more pleasing plumage and type, which appeared under the name

Eureka. The combination of the two original crosses, with the last named, formed a desirable breed; and from that time on they grew in popularity and their sales became really marvelous, though advertised as American Sebrights, Excelsiors, Eurekas, Ambrights, Columbias, etc. In order to harmonize and settle on a name, Mr. I. K. Felch suggested the name Hambletonian and prepared a standard, which was the basis of the one made for the breed at Worcester, Mass., in 1883, when it was admitted under the name Wyandotte.

"Mr. Fred A. Houdlette, of Waltham, Mass., an enthusiastic fancier and admirer of the new breed, suggested the name Wyandotte, after a tribe of Indians, but possibly out of some inspiring recollection of his father's ship, which was named 'Wyandotte.' However, the name was a surprise, and the pill which the fanciers of the country had to swallow was somewhat disagreeable, though perplexed and confused by the number of names attached to the breed.

"Doubtless, much of the enthusiasm and excitement over the Silver Wyandotte was due to the little booms which the fanciers of the different crosses tried to establish on the appearance of their favorites. Another factor of their popularity, which has escaped public attention, is the trouble and perplexing disappointments which followed the breeding of Plymouth Rocks to uniformity of color and matching in the show-pen. The Wyandotte was hailed as a relief by those who had not been very successful with the other breed; the plumage of the Wyandotte being unique, their size, laying and table qualities being much in their favor, they soon shared a measure of the popularity lavished on the Plymouth Rocks.

Wyandottes.

"The Wyandotte met a hearty welcome in every stage of its transition. American fanciers began to take an interest in new breeds of American origin. The Plymouth Rock was a grand success, although its color is much against it as an ornamental or fancy breed; the Wyandotte, on the contrary, showed promise of becoming a handsome fowl, when the skill of the fancier had brought it up to standard requirements. Hundreds engaged in the breeding of Wyandottes before the breed was admitted to Standard honors; and so enthusiastic were the admirers of this noble breed that Messrs. Arnold and Houdlette published a standard for the breed in advance of the American Poultry Association.

"The favorable qualities of the Silver Wyandotte have come through judicious crossing and improvement of each cross. After the first experimental cross, there was no haphazard crossing. The Asiatic, with its large frame, robust constitution, and quiet nature, transmitted these desirable merits to modify the nervousness, sprightliness, and non-sitting trait of the Silver Spangled Hamburg. On the other hand, the Hamburg has transmitted a share of its precocity and prolificacy, besides exterior points. The original crosses served to modify the Asiatic characteristics, and these, combined with the Hamburg-Brahma cross, established the 'happy medium' now characteristic of the Wyandotte.

"The original combination would probably create a very good breed in time, if left to itself and the skill of fanciers; but being reinforced with fresh material of a better quality, the modification and improvement became more marked, and the objectionable points of each being largely bred out, all har-

monized in one grand whole. It is almost certain that the originator had a laced breed in mind, and that the lacing of the Sebright Bantam was the ideal in view, excepting the tail and hackles, which were to be black and black laced with white. However magnificent the ideal, few birds have appeared in late years that could be called Sebright Laced.

"Some writers think that a Silver Polish fowl was a likely element in some of the crosses, but there is not the slightest foundation for this opinion, because some of the points of the various breeds in the combination have appeared at one time or another, but no crested chick, none with bifurcated comb, none with cavernous nostrils, and these could not be wholly bred out in so short a time. If some advanced fanciers look on the Silver Polish hen as the ideal for the Wyandotte hen, in lacing, that is no sign Silver Polish had anything to do with the plumage of the Wyandotte. Seeing so few hens of Sebright lacing, that of the Silver Polish can be more readily attained by adding a solid black tail and a Dark Brahma hackle.

"It is useless to dwell on the object of the originator of Sebright Cochins. We hardly think he had a variety of Cochins in view, by using a bantam, and it is doubtful that he sought to make a Cochin Bantam, because he ceased further reduction of size. In all probability a medium sized fowl was the ultimate object, but the white ground-color and black lacing of the Sebright were wanting; the whole plumage presented a yellowish cast, being rather a mass of lacing, penciling and mossing; too light in both sexes to be attractive and pleasing.

"At this crisis in the breed, it was deemed advisable to fix a preponderance of black without changing

other features, in order to make the lacing distinct. The black fowl of Breda blood, mentioned by Mr. Felch, offered a very suitable cross on account of its flesh qualities and unique comb, but the addition of the Brahma cross left the breed in a condition which would favor either the lightness of the Hamburg plumage or that of a dark plumage with white centers, as the partiality of fanciers should dictate. Breeders found much penciling and mossing in place of clear and distinct lacing in the light-plumaged birds. Mr. Felch always advised to make black the preponderant color, as the tendency of the breed was to light plumage, and we frequently advised the same thing.

"When we take a retrospective view of the Wyandotte, we are surprised at the unprecedented boom it had, both before and after its being admitted to the Standard. No breed up to that time had ever been in such demand; perhaps no breed will ever enjoy such a boom. But, with its popularity was created a greed for gain; wretched specimens were put on the market together with every speckled fowl having a rose comb, which rapidly lessened their popularity. A few far-seeing fanciers held on to their stock and denounced jobbers and unscrupulous breeders for putting on the market such fowls; advised co-operation in breeding high-class standard birds and exposing frauds. This, together with the confidence of their admirers, won back their former popularity, and now it is universally conceded that it rests on a foundation as permanent as the everlasting hills."

One has simply to consider the admixture of the above composition of the Silver Wyandotte to know of the many styles prevalent back in the early eighties.

SILVER LACED WYANDOTTE FEMALE

No wonder Mr. Raines complains of his early purchase from America, as recorded in his book, "The Wyandotte," as published by the Feathered World, of England. He writes: "It is now many years since I imported my first Wyandottes. They were Silvers, and although then just out, cost as much as a good pen would now, or perhaps more, after defraying carriage and various other expenses. I shall never forget my anxiety to receive them, and, of course, as a consequence, they appeared to take an extra long time on the journey; but in due time they did arrive, and, to say the least of it, I was dreadfully disappointed. What I expected to see and what I did see were two very different things. I thought the birds would be decently marked, but they turned out to be far from that.

"Here is a description of these Wyandottes when they first arrived, since they are the grandparents of many in England now; to give such a description now is rather difficult. Starting at their extremities, I may say that their legs were yellow. The birds were large, good layers, and capital for table purposes, but failed dreadfully as regards uniformity in marking. These early birds were mostly moss. One had a white breast, another a white back, the third had, I know, but a moderate breast, and as for the other and the cock, I really can't explain what they were like, for they showed far more Brahma than anything else."

When we consider the combination of colors and marking, it is not to be wondered at that Mr. Raines found it almost impossible to tell what they did look like. Well do we remember them, also our early dislike for them. We transferred over one hundred of

them to another party for fifty cents each. This party selected many valuable birds from them and sold the balance at good prices. It may be some of them found their way to Mr. Raines' hands, for the purchaser had a demand for his stock from all over the world. Their present high quality from almost chaos is a tribute to the ability of those who moulded their improvement.

CHAPTER II.

The Advanced Type of Wyandotte.

The quotations and statements in the last chapter express many hardships through which our early Wyandottes wandered to gain their start upon their journey to the position at the head of their family. It was much more difficult to originate a new breed than to propagate from it other varieties. Those who entirely formed the new breed accomplished by far more than those who follow to perfect either it or its sub-varieties.

The personal acquaintance of the author with those called "Sebright Cochins" began with their first appearance in print; later we knew them as the "American Sebright." Those seen under this name were of many forms and colors, reminding one of all the breeds said to have been used in their construction.

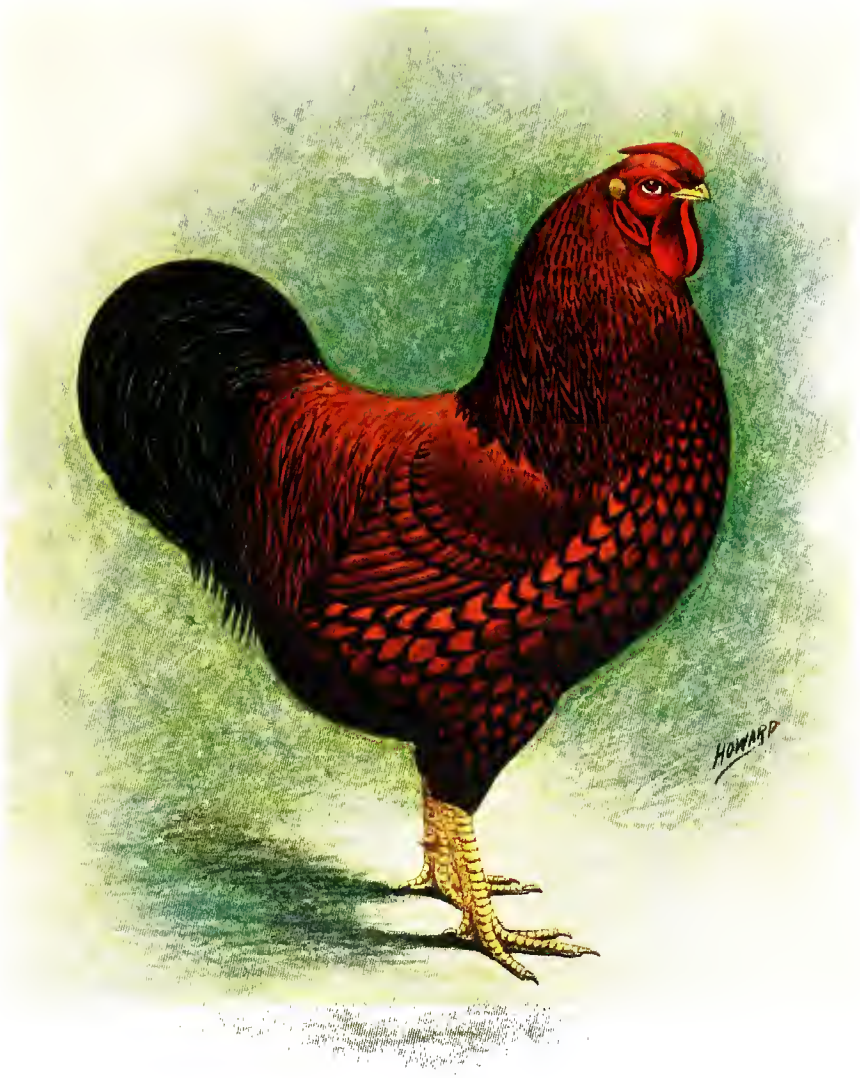
Some resembled the Hamburg, some a Brahma, and few of them had any set type and did not have any until they had begun to show their present form of body. In their make-up are the Sebright, the Hamburg, the Brahma, and the Cochin. When we contemplate this union of the spangle of the Hamburg and the penciling of the Brahma, no wonder the mossing of the centers show on our Silver females; and it is not much better for the Goldens that have Partridge Cochin and Brown Leghorn blood to contend with. This combination gave one of the hardest problems for the breeder to handle, for the reason that he had to produce on his females the marking of feathers that was only present with the Sebright Bantam which started their existence so many years ago.

The first standard called for almost the same color and markings of the present day. Then the breast of male had to have a medium size white center; now it is a large white center. In females, the first standard called for a small white center for back and a white breast evenly laced with black. Now we have changed to a more open lacing and the inclination is toward a Sebright form of color and marking. While this is true our present description is almost the same as was given to the crude original of our modern Wyandotte.

In early days we believed we scored them at their value. Then many specimens scored over 90 that to-day we could not endure, showing the influence that better quality has over our judgment. Allowing that the birds have improved each year one-half point, to-day, as we reason, there should be at least one close to the line of perfection, which seems as far away as ever. And why? Simply because we have learned by experience that birds grow better each year.

Wyandotte Shape.—The proper Wyandotte shape is quite as striking as the form of a Game cock. What would be our opinion of the breeder who placed on exhibition a Game cock that was formed like a Leghorn? No one for a moment would favor such proceedings. At the same time we are not equally severe as to Wyandotte shape. It should be positively demanded that Wyandotte shape shall be as closely adhered to as is the shape of any other breed.

One of the best all-around fowls is the Silver Wyandotte. Its size is good, its form most perfect, considered from the utility standpoint, and its color is of the best—not white enough to soil, nor black

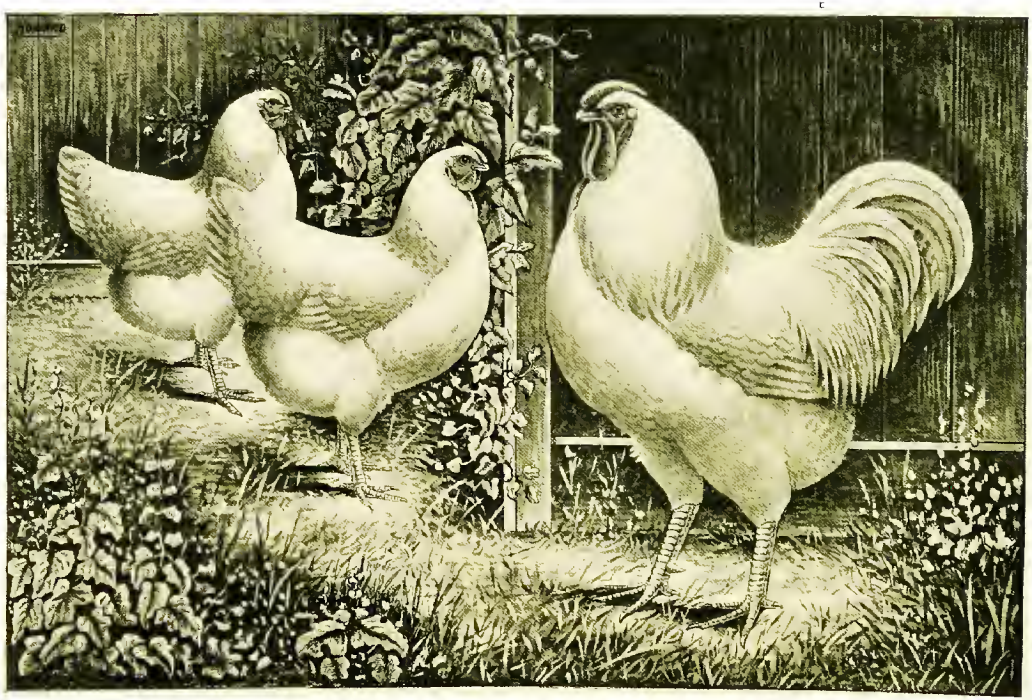


GOLDEN LACED WYANDOTTE MALE

enough to injure for market purposes. It simply needs continued attention to make it as perfect a show fowl as its cousin, the White. Like all penciled or spangled fowls, it must be line bred with considerable care to free its plumage from the bad markings of the present time. There can be no real reason advanced showing why the Wyandottes, both Silver and Golden, can not be brought as close to the standard line of perfection in color as any barred, penciled, or spangled fowl. The laws of reproduction teach us that in white fowls the pureness of the color can be materially injured in a single year by the use of a male having a yellowish cast in plumage. If this slight cast in color will injure the whole flock, if a slight creamy cast is so injurious, what may we expect to come to the center color of the plumage of our female Silver Wyandottes unless we use more consideration in our union of colors?

Take the one section of the after portion of back of female. How few do we see that have feathers with good centers, free from mossing? We look into pen after pen in our show-room and hunt for the ideal black plumage so seldom found, and wonder why we make haste so slowly in this direction. Many have cast the breed aside simply on this ground. They say the almost impossible task of clearing the plumage has discouraged them from ever gaining the desired quality. Have you given your best consideration to these facts in selecting the birds of your breeding-pens, or have you overlooked important factors?

Proper Surface Color.—The so-called "top-color" of the Silver Wyandotte male should be quite like the Dark Brahma, silvery-white in color. Far better not



White Wyandottes

to mate at all than to make use of males that have the dark or brown top-color. Just as sure as this is present, it will show bad color in the center of back-plumage. Too much attention can not be paid to this, if it is wished to have good open-laced pullets. When we make use of males that have the dark shaded color in back we simply invite disappointment.

The proper color for the Silver Wyandotte male is silvery-white for neck, back, saddle, and wings; for breast and other portions that are laced, white centers with black edging. White and black are the only true colors for the surface of the Silver Wyandotte. To give the slightest encouragement to either to be present where it does not belong is to court poor results in the young stock. Purity of color is an absolute necessity when success is hoped for.

The many admixtures of blood in the Wyandotte, both Silver and Golden, must continually be at war with each other. The transfer of specimens from one yard to another brings about continued internal disturbances that can only be lessened or controlled by closing out these faults by careful breeding. Close family unions only should be allowed. Build up several families of your own and transfer from one to another, but never hope to improve the color of your families by using males with the brownish cast in top-plumage.

In Dark Brahmas the best females are bred from males with the light under-color. The best pullet-breeding strains of Partridge color have the light under-color, and so must the dark under-color of our Wyandottes, both Silver and Golden, be softened considerably to gain the much-desired surface-color. Black casts its shadow over every color; its influence

is self asserting, and while we obliterate its influence over the center markings we can soften and curtail its dominating power and with care confine it to its own domain. This process may weaken the under-color, but at the same time it is sure to improve top-color in males and centers of the females.

Selection of the Sire.—The ideal Silver Wyandotte to be used as a breeding bird should be free from brown or any color, save the pure silvery-white and black, each of which should be clear and true. The black stripe of hackle and saddle should be rich of color and true in form. The breast-feathers should be about equally divided between white and black and the saddle plumage should be nicely centered with a diamond-shape center of white. Shape should be as perfect as can be found in a Wyandotte; size medium, head-points excellent. These same conditions should be present with the Golden, with the change of the golden-bay for the white.

The theory is advanced that by making the effort to clear the plumage in this way too much white will be the result. No doubt this will be so in some cases, more especially with those who encourage very large white centers on breast, but those who use care and judgment and keep the black in the females bright and pure in surface-color and select those for breeding that do not incline to a predominance of white, will gain their desire. Do not try to do this all at once. Do not make the mistake of using males with too much white. The proper males to use are those as clear and clean as possible, that have the distinct black center stripe in both hackle and saddle and that are as free as possible from any show of the dark collar about the neck and dark shading on the back.

CHAPTER III.

Our Standard Demands Since 1883.

From the very first the standard for Wyandottes described the short, compact male specimen; the back, breast, and body of female almost identical with description of Cochin female at the time of their admission to the Standard. A full cushion was called for in our first description, now changed to slightly cushioned. In the male the description of these sections has scarcely been changed in its wording. The only difference in the back description for Plymouth Rocks and Wyandottes is in length; the Wyandotte back short. We should consider this rather a faulty section of the standard that needed attention. The greatest existing difference in shape between the two breeds is in back and body, as influenced by the plumage construction; the former has the close plumage of its ancestors. The Wyandotte should be fashioned after the Cochin, somewhat modified by the crosses used.

There can be but little doubt in the mind of well-informed fanciers as to whether or not they wish the male Wyandotte to have the same identical form of the Plymouth Rock. If so, why not use but one shape description for both? If not, then consider what should be for each and have the proper wording recorded in the Standard. As it is to-day, about the only marked difference in the description of back is its length. The only question is, shall the breed distinction be kept distinctive, or shall it be allowed to amalgamate? It is often seen by object lesson that some favor the Cochin shape in Plymouth Rock

females; at times we see winners very full in cushion and fluff, while some of the winning Wyandotte females have long backs and but little evidence of either cushion or fluff. These can not all be correct as the Standard is worded. The most desirable shape for each should be selected and so plainly described that no mistakes, such as mentioned above, could be made.

The original color description of breast-plumage of female was about the same as at present, a white web evenly laced or edged with black; or, in other words, the breast-plumage to be fashioned after the Silver Sebright. Under this description they have been favored with almost black plumage having small white ceuters. The wording is, "Web of feather, white; each feather laced with black." In the male breast-plumage is black, with large white center tapering to a point near the extremity.

English vs. American Standard. — The English Standard of the United Wyandotte Club calls for breast of both male and female white with deep black lacing from throat to back of thighs (in female deep, regular black lacing); in both a green luster to the black is called for. The back of the female, color and lacing same as breast; same on wings. General characteristics resembling a Brahma. The back description of male, broad and short; saddle full and broad, rising with concave sweep to tail. Same as ours. In speaking of the male bird the English writers go quite against our description. We call for a white center, which tapers to a point near the extremities; they very much discourage this V-shaped lacing and say the black should run even in width all around the feather, the breast to be laced from the throat to the

GOLDEN-LACED WYANDOTTE FEMALE

back of the thighs—an ideal not often found. Many of the best are often found almost solid black under the throat and on the sides. As to the female, they say the pattern of the lacing should be the same all over her body. These comparisons give us the difference of their demands as to exhibition qualities as compared with ours. We having made the mistake some few years back in showing a preference for the darker pattern of lacing, the result was quite a backset to their advancement and the loss of many years that should have been devoted to their improvement. All eyes turned with delight to the winning pullet of the 1899 Boston and New York shows. She was an example of what might be, had we continued upon the proper lines from the start, one even pattern all over her body, as shown by the feather-plate made from feathers furnished from the New York winner, by her owner, Mr. J. T. Cothran, of New Rochelle, New York.

The Golden Wyandotte.

The Golden Wyandotte was originated by Mr. Joseph McKeen, of Omro, Wisconsin, from a union of Pea-Combed Partridge Cochins, Brown Leghorns, and what at that time were called American Sebrights. Others used Golden Hamburgs and Partridge Cochins with Brown Leghorns and Black Breasted Games. None were so successful as Mr. McKeen in producing both shape and color. The penciling of the Partridge Cochin and the color of the plumage of the Brown Leghorn have found their way into what should be solid golden-bay centers and trouble them continually with mossing, the same as with the Silvers.

Wyandottes.

The black and golden-bay of this variety gained for them marked attention all over the world. For years the gates of public favor were swung in their direction, but the extremely difficult problem of producing them to the requirement of the show-room caused them, as well as the Silvers, to decline in public favor. The good sense of many of their admirers kept them within the lines of single matings and the medium center color, not striving for the extreme Sebright lacing. From this, better results on the average have been obtained.

The Golden Wyandotte is identical with the Silver, except the golden-bay color in place of the silvery-white. In some respects the Goldens are better in color. The diamond center or saddle is more prevalent with them, many having a clear golden diamond center in both saddle and hackle, which helps considerably in producing well-shaped centers on the Golden females. Much now depends upon the true color of the golden-bay and the black. The yellow or buff for centers will not do. The color must be the true golden-bay laced about with rich, glossy black, both colors to be clear, bright, and clean-cut.

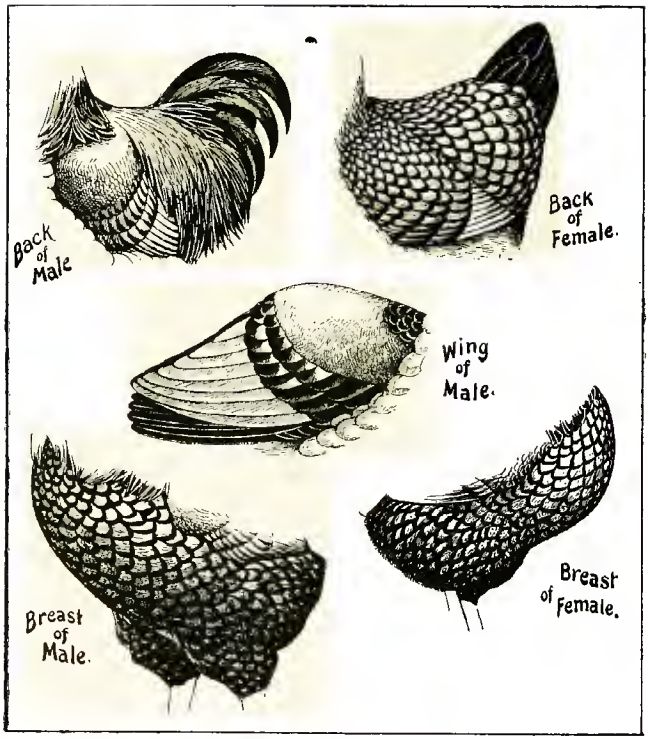
When selecting specimens for breeding the same high qualities should be sought for in the Goldens as is desirable in the Silvers. The same care should be used in an effort for the very best form accompanied with good color. The Golden Wyandotte to be beautiful must have grace of form and perfection of color and markings. If these are not present their real qualities are lacking and they are simply a laced fowl without value beyond that which they will bring for market poultry.

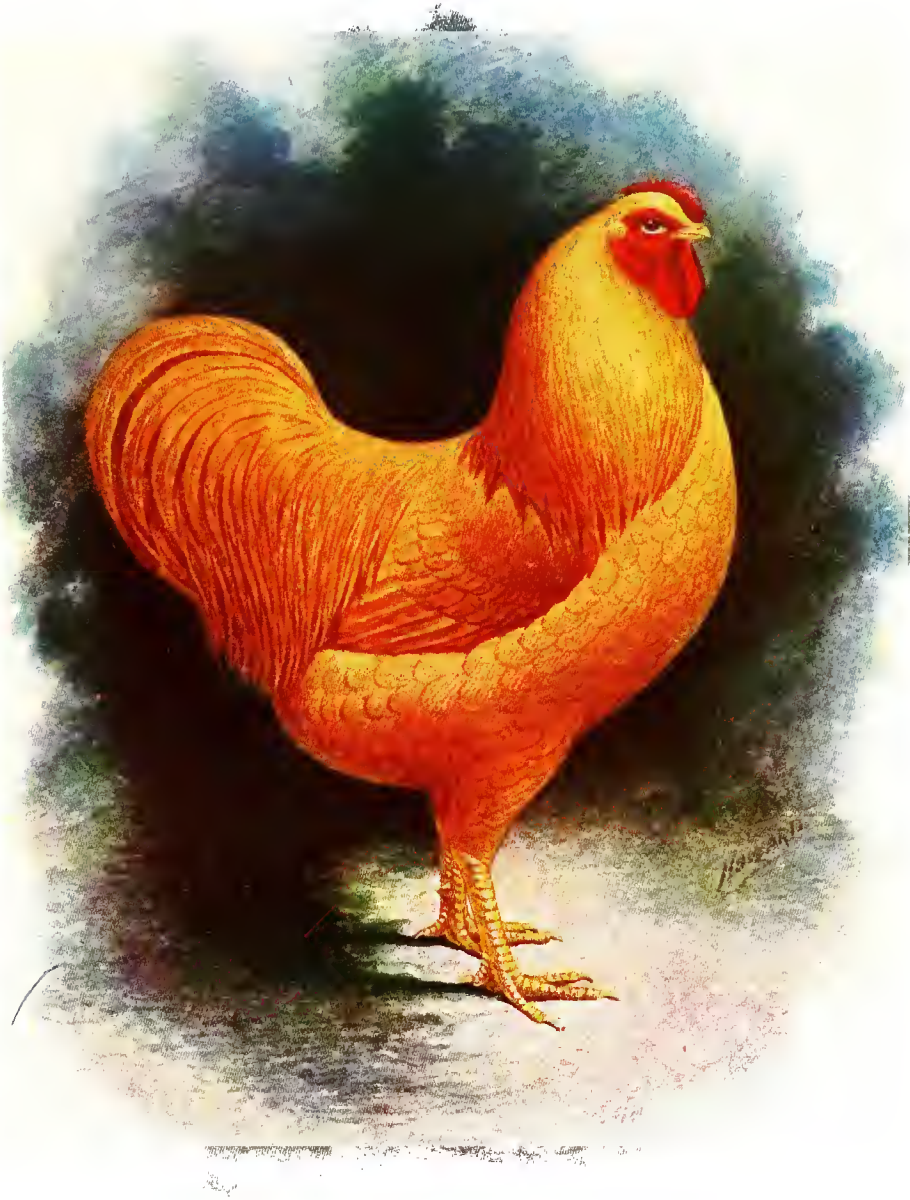
CHAPTER IV.

Silver Laced Wyandottes.

The name of the Wyandotte is, as well as their origin, distinctly American. As an American creation we are proud of their qualities, and unhesitatingly place them foremost as a beautiful and useful member of the feathered race. Their points of excellence warranted their popularity from the beginning, and there is no relax of sentiment or enthusiasm for them at the present time. Breeders claim for them to-day the same qualities they did in the days and years gone by. Their boom has been continual, and their praises will be sung by those who have been impressed with their beauty and their profitable qualities. No pretence will be made to give their history in this article. Suffice it to say that in their little more than a quarter century's history, they have developed from comparatively nothing to one of the most popular birds in America. They came from experiment, as do all new varieties, and their ancestry figures largely in Dark Brahmas, Silver Spangled Hamburgs, and perhaps a little Cochin blood has been used in their making.

Of the Wyandotte classes it is difficult to place the most popular one. Each class has its many admirers, but the two Laced classes—the Silvers and Goldens—are perhaps the most difficult to breed to standard requirements. The marking of the Silver Laced Wyandotte in a perfect specimen is something to be wondered at; the detail of the feather-markings reveals a beauty that is refreshing, remarkable, and enchant-


Back of Male
Back of Female.
Wing of Male.
Breast of Male.
Breast of Female.

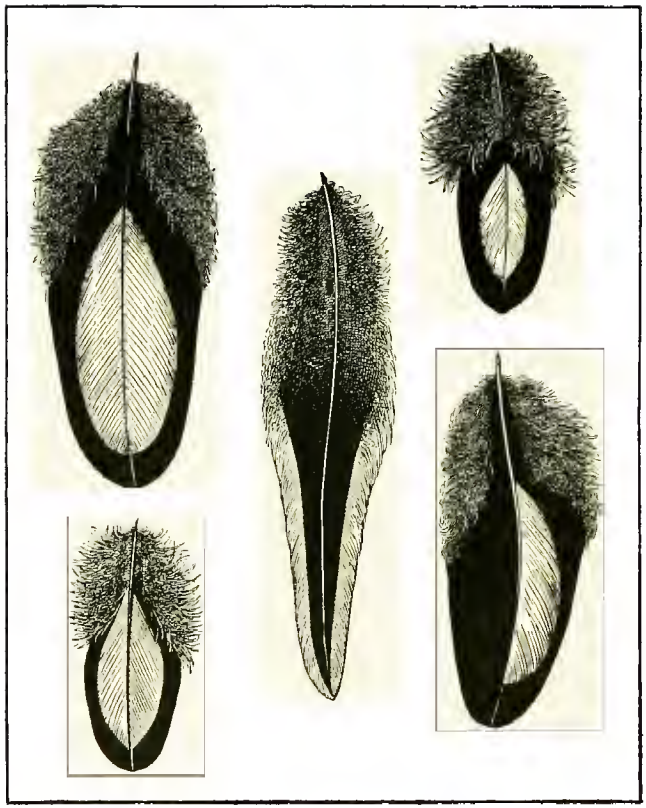


BUFF WYANDOTTE MALE

ing. It is a study in black and white. These contrasts in color are with harmonizing effect, and make an easy, welcome picture to the eye.

In breeding Wyandottes, one must first establish the exact shape and symmetry characteristic to the breed. The combined influences of description and art are necessary to portray the image as graced in nature. By comparison with other poultry, the Wyandotte is of medium size, with a rather short neck, short legs, short and broad head, surmounted with a low, flat rose-comb. They are chunky, nicely made, and compactly built fowls, weighing eight and one-half pounds for cocks, six and one-half pounds for hens, seven and one-half pounds for cockerels, and five and one-half pounds for pullets. Their size, shape, and early-maturing qualities make them much-sought-after birds for practical purposes. Their flesh is sweet, juicy, and tender, making them general favorites for broilers and roasters. As layers, they compare exceedingly well with the best, and give good returns in winter laying.

The head of a Silver Laced Wyandotte cock is short, and broad across the crown; the color of head is silvery-white, with black stripe down the center of each feather, terminating in a fine point; beak is well curved, and of a dark brown or horn-color, shading to yellow at the point; eye is bright bay; face, bright red. Long, narrow heads, dark plumage, bills streaked with too much black, and eyes other than bay, will necessarily be reckoned defects according to their prominence. The comb is rose, carried low and firm upon the head; the top is oval in shape, terminating in a spike in the rear, and the whole curving slightly and in conformity to the shape of the skull; the sur-



face of comb is covered evenly with small points or corrugations, and is bright red in color. The spike of the comb is not so prominent as in a Hamburg, and curves slightly downward, while that of the Hamburg curves upward. A comb should not have uneven corrugations, deep holes or hollows, or an absence of points, by being in parts or in whole. The wattles of a Wyandotte cock are of a medium length, and fine in texture; they should not be long and pendulous, as in the Leghorn cock, but well-rounded and of a shortish appearance. Ear-lobes should be well developed and smooth; the wattles and ear-lobes are bright red in color. White in the ear-lobes is a defect, and full white ear-lobes will disqualify the bird.

One of the prettiest parts of the bird is its neck; this is much thought of, and prized very highly. The neck is short and well arched, with full and abundant plumage. In color the neck-plumage is silvery-white, with a clear black stripe running down the center of each feather as shown in Fig. 1, and tapering to a point near the extremity of the feather. The white should not be streaked with black or brown, which gives the feather a smutty or indistinct appearance. A long neck, scanty feathering, and irregularly marked feathers are to be avoided.

The back is short and broad at the shoulders, and has a massive appearance, as shown in Fig. 2. A good back is a strong point in the cock. It adds to his shape and symmetry, and sets off the neck and tail to advantage. In color the back is silvery-white. The saddle, which begins between the middle of the shoulders and extends to the tail, should be broad, and rise with a concave sweep to the tail. The color of plumage of the saddle is silvery-white, with a black stripe

down the center of each feather, as in the hackle. The saddle-feathering should be abundant and full. The breast should be broad, with a straight breast-bone. The broad and well-developed breast is a particular feature of the Wyandotte, making them of much value as a table fowl. The lacing effect should be sharply outlined and distinct, the black separating from the white in an even, unbroken line. Fig. 3 shows with good effect the breast of a Silver Laced cock. The under-color is slate; the web of the feather is black, with large white centers tapering to a point near the end. The white center of the feather should not be so small as shown in Fig. 4, as such feathers will give a darker effect of breast than is required by the Standard. Fig. 5 shows a feather that comes nearer Standard requirements, and gives the open-laced effect so much sought after. The open lacing is not to be exaggerated, or there will be a tendency to too much whiteness in the breast, which will interfere with the beauty of the lacing and deteriorate the value of the bird. The prevailing color is lustrous black with white lacings, and black must predominate in the breast, body, and fluff. Serious defects of the breast are narrowness, lack of fullness, crooked breast-bones, unevenly laced feathers, or feathers not entirely laced around the webbed portion, as shown in Fig. 6, where the black lacing is only on the tip of the feather in the form of a crescent.

The body should be short and well rounded—not elongated as in the Brahma cock—but deep and full, with a breadth at the sides and front. The under-color of plumage is slate, the web of the feather black; or it may be black slightly frosted or sprinkled with white. This frosted appearance should not be too

light, but should rather incline to a deep black. The fluff is full feathered and well rounded in appearance, to be in proportion and harmony with the body. The color of the fluff is dark slate, slightly powdered with gray.

The wing of a Wyandotte is a beautiful thing, and the breeding of a prime wing is accomplishing something to be proud of. The black and white are distributed beautifully, and appeal to the artistic eye in an instant. In Fig. 7 is shown a good idea of how a wing should look. The wing is medium in size, nicely folded, and carried reasonably high. The primaries are black, the outer web edged with white; wing-coverts, the upper web is black, while the lower web is white, and has a narrow stripe of black along the edge, and as it approaches the tip it widens and forms a double spangled bar across the wing, as shown in Fig. 8. Frequently these feathers breed with white webs on both sides of the quill, and edged evenly with black, as shown in Fig. 9. The wing-bows are silvery-white, with a slaty under-color, and white web. The wing-bar should have no solid white or solid black feathers; or if the wing-coverts are white or gray on the tips, instead of the spangled bar, as shown in Fig. 8, the beauty of the wing-bar is marred, and a broken, irregular bar is formed which spoils the beauty of the wing. The tail is well spread at the base, and is well developed; sickles of medium length, and gracefully curving over the tail, with slightly projecting ends, and in color of a rich, glossy black. The tail-coverts are of the same glossy black color as the sickles, while the lesser coverts are black edged with white. The sickle-feathers should not be too long, the coverts too scant, nor any white show in the main

feathers of the tail for a standard cock; neither should the tail be carried too low or too high, so as to appear squirrel-tailed, but should be carried in an even, upright position, which balances the bird nicely when standing erect. A wry tail disqualifies the bird. Fig. 2 shows a fairly good tail. The thighs should be stout and short, being well spread in appearance and covered with soft black feathers, powdered with gray; shanks are short and stout, free from all feathering or stubs of feathers, and of a bright yellow in color; the toes are of the same color as the shanks—bright yellow—and are well spread. The thighs and shanks should not be long and slender, but short and stout in proportion to the size of the bird. The legs should also be straight, without any tendency to angularity at the hock-joints, or any approach to being curved inward, so as to give the bird a knock-kneed appearance. The shanks and toes should also be free from black spots or scales, and any roughness other than is caused by the formation of an even and well-made shank.

The head of a Silver Laced Wyandotte hen is short, with a broad crown, and of the same silvery-white plumage as in cock. The beak is stout at base, and of a dark horn-color, which gradually shades to a yellow at the point. Eyes are a bright bay. The comb is the same as that of cock, but smaller, and evenly covered with small points or corrugations. The wattles are short and of a rounded appearance, which differs from those of the male, the latter being medium in length and pendant. This should be considered in breeding, so as to give the bird its true head and jaunty appearance. The comb and ear-lobes are bright red in color.

BUFF WYANDOTTE FEMALE

The neck of the hen is similar to that of the cock, but is shorter and more compactly built, and in color is silvery-white. Each feather has a black stripe down its center, tapering to a point near the extremity. The black should be distinctly marked, and free from broken edges or irregular shapes; the white edge of feathers should be free from any semblance of black or brown, which will give the feather a dirty or smutty appearance.

The back is broad and slightly cushioned in a good specimen; broad at the shoulders, giving a flat, but not a narrow, appearance. The webs of feathers are black, with medium white centers, and under-color of dark slate. There should be no black or brown in white portion of feather, and the black edging should be sharp and distinct in outline. Fig. 10 shows a good back, wing, and tail of female.

The breast of a well-laced hen is a mass of loveliness, and does more for the general beauty of the bird than all other portions added together. The effect is the same as in cock, the black predominating. Fig. 11 shows a good breast, with large white centers. Fig. 12 shows a breast that has black in abundance, with small, white-centered feathers. This latter colored breast is not what the Standard requires, neither is it pretty in effect. Some breeders are bold enough to prefer it to the standard breast, yet it is not policy to place it in direct opposition to the rules laid down for breeding standard Wyandottes. A comparison of the two drawings shows the contrast between the two styled breasts. The standard breast, as shown in Fig. 11, is the more lively and attractive in plumage. The under-color of the breast is slate, with the web white, evenly laced with black.

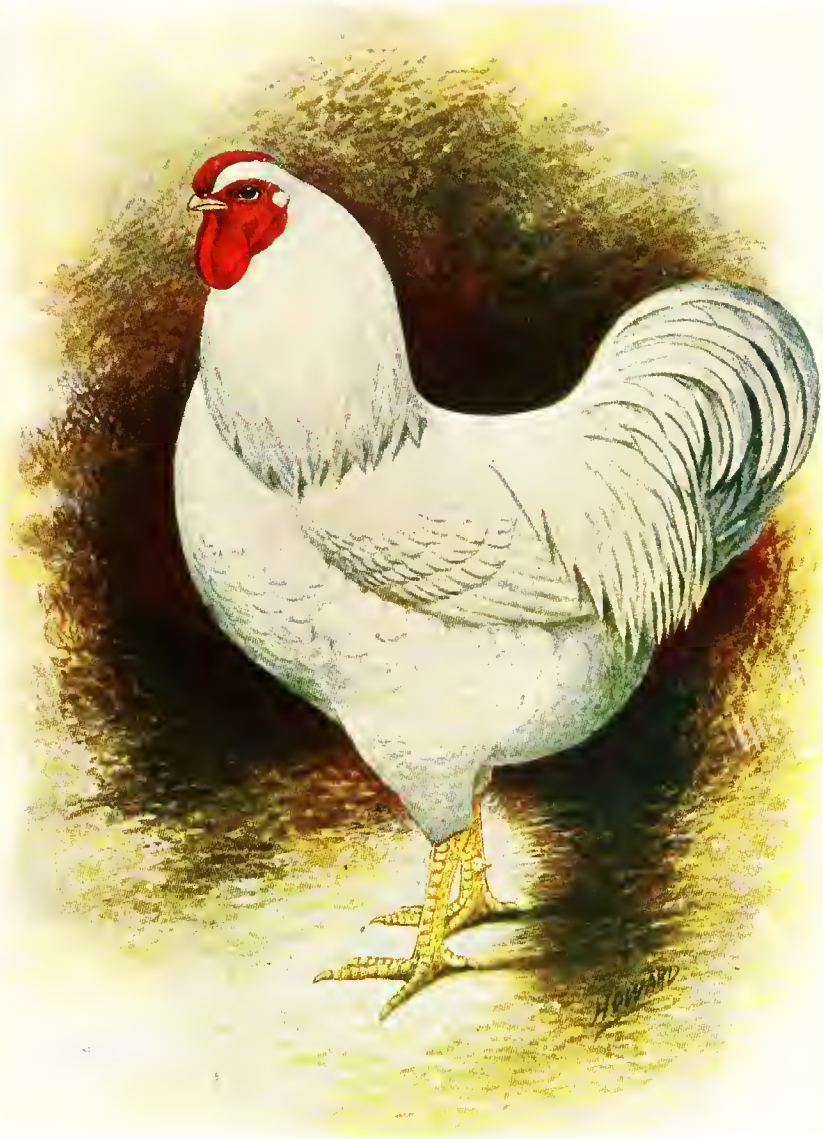
The body is short and well rounded; the under-color of plumage is slate. The web of feather is black, with a narrow white center running into black, as required by the Standard, which assumes a frosted or powdered appearance near the thighs. The well-rounded fluff is full feathered with dark slate feathers, powdered with gray. Full and rounded breasts are to be desired at all times.

The wings of hens are medium sized, and carried well up on the body. The primaries, or flight-feathers, are black, with a narrow white lacing on the lower or outer web. The secondaries are black on the inner web and around the tip-end of the feather; the outer web is white. When the wing is properly folded only the white on the outer web and the black crescent on the tips can be seen. The under-color of the wing and shoulder-coverts are slate; the webs of the feathers are same as those of the breast—white centers heavily laced with black, and the lacing growing heavier or wider over the wing-bow. The defects of wings are in color and irregular folding; the lowest feathers should rest against the sides naturally, as shown in Fig. 10. The wing-bar should be free from solid white or gray feathers, as well as solid black feathers.

The tail, as shown in Fig. 10, is well developed, and carried in a fairly upright position, but free from all semblance to a squirrel tail, and well spread at the base. The tail should not be too small, or held too close together, but should balance evenly. The feathers of the tail and greater coverts are black, as are the lesser coverts, but the Standard allows the latter to be black, with narrow white centers. It is more

preferable to have all feathers of the tail black, and avoid the white centers in the lesser coverts when possible. The shanks and toes as described for cock apply also to the hen.

White Wyandottes



WHITE WYANDOTTE MALE

CHAPTER V.

White and Black Wyandottes.

It is to be regretted that those who produced new breeds or varieties did not keep a careful record of all dates of sport productions as well as crosses made. It is a question as to whom the first honors should be given for the production of White Wyandottes. Some early writers give much credit to Mr. B. M. Briggs, of Wyandale, N. Y., and record his as the first strain of Whites to be shown of good Wyandotte form and having anything like good color. Being sports from the Silvers they inherit the proper Wyandotte characteristics, a most favorable part of their early make-up.

We clip the following from articles written by the undersigned gentlemen, for the Pacific Poultryman, of September, 1898:

"Origin of the White Wyandotte.

"Unlike many of the new and valuable varieties that have been produced by crossing different breeds together and carefully selecting the produce, the White Wyandotte first originated from sports of the Silver Wyandotte. Mr. Geo. H. Towle, of Truxton, New York, was a breeder of Silver Wyandottes, and during the season of 1872 he hatched several white sports, birds that were of the same size and had the same general characteristics as the Silver variety, but pure white in color.

"It was a question whether these sports would breed true or if the produce would take back to the

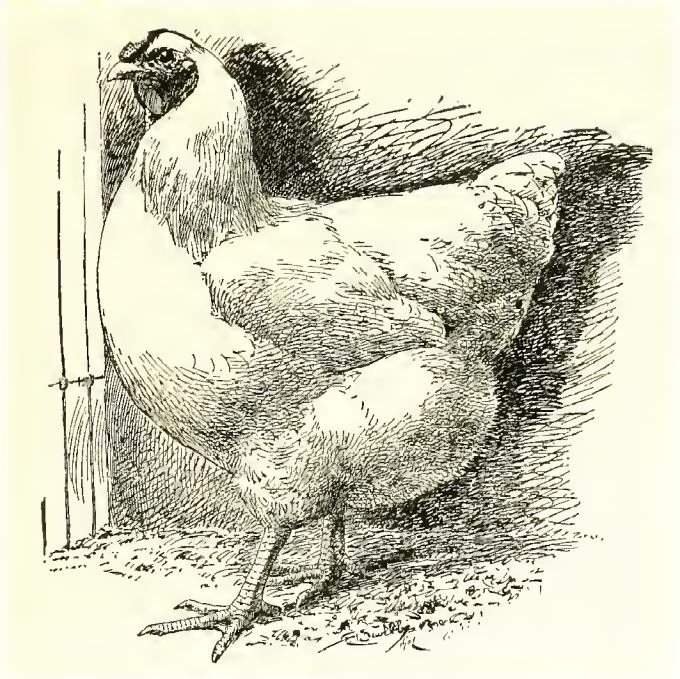
Silvers. A trial proved that they bred true to type and color, were as distinct a breed as the Silvers, and actually bred a larger per cent of good birds on account of their being solid color.

"Mr. Towle bred these white birds carefully for seven years on his own farm, making very little stir about them, and not once dreaming of the great popularity and boom that was in store for them. During the season of 1885, Mr. Geo. H. Preston, of Binghamton, New York, secured some of these birds, and by the liberal use of printer's ink soon had them on the boom and had more orders for stock and eggs than he could fill.

"In the spring of 1885, foreseeing the great boom that the breed was sure to enjoy, I went personally to Binghamton and Truxton, New York, and within forty-eight hours was the owner of this entire strain of White Wyandottes, and had them shipped to my farm at Lancaster, Mass. Since that time they have improved in size, form, and clearness of color, and are to-day one of the most beautiful and practical breeds. They earned their great popularity on their real merit."—A. C. Hawkins, Lancaster, Mass.

"Origin and Development of a Strain of White Wyandottes.

"By way of introduction to this little story, it may not be uninteresting to some to state how I became interested in thoroughbred poultry. Soon after graduation from college, in June, 1881, and settlement as pastor at West Brattleboro, Vermont, owing to overwork I was seriously threatened with nervous prostration. Relief was obtained in this wise: One of my parishioners presented me with a trio of Barred



White Wyandotte Pullet

Plymouth Rocks; another with some Brown Leghorns. With these as starters I began breeding and studying poultry, and thus found a pleasant and profitable diversion from taxing professional studies and duties not only, but also great relief from nervousness and sleeplessness. I can, therefore, heartily endorse this remedy to those who are similarly afflicted. The passion for poultry rapidly developed. In 1884 the Silver Laced Wyandotte struck me all over. No other fever ever consumed me, bone, tissue, and all, so fiercely. Correspondence was opened with breeders and advertisers, and a trio was at length secured from a New York dealer; but, alas! though a good price was paid, they did not suit me. Then I corresponded with Dr. Deyo, of New York, who had won a good share of Madison Square prizes, paid him his price for six birds, with guaranteed high scores, and obtained beauties and entire satisfaction. They won the admiration and the envy of all the local breeders, who persistently tried to buy them of me. From this stock I raised a fine lot of chicks in 1885. I also bought some eggs from Mr. Fred. A. Houdlette, of Boston, originator and proprietor of the famous King Philip strain of Silver Laced Wyandottes; and from these eggs I obtained a 95-point cockerel that Mr. Houdlette called a marvelous copy of old King Philip himself. This cockerel was mated with selected pullets from the Deyo prize stock, and from this mating came the following remarkable results:

"Having been called to the pastorate of Marlboro, Mass., I removed thither January 1, 1886, and took with me the above-mentioned cockerel, named King Philip II and his mates. Among the first brood of chicks hatched from this mating there was one as

pure white as the driven snow. To say that I was amazed and chagrined puts it very mildly. I feared that the mischief was to pay in some inexplicable way. Though my fence was high and the yards very secure, and my birds carefully tended, yet I imagined there must have been, somehow, surreptitious cohabitation with some other fowls. I cut that beautiful chick's head clean off and buried it deep. The second brood of chicks from King Philip II had three pure white ones; and the third brood, two; and each succeeding brood from one to four, during the season. Persons to whom I had shipped eggs began to write letters informing me of the experience. And, though none called me hard names, they naturally wanted to know what in the world such 'freaks' meant. When my second brood came off with three pure white chicks, all perfect Wyandotte type, it dawned upon me (though I had never seen or heard of the like before among Wyandottes) that they were genuine 'sports' or 'albinos.' I killed no more. I wrote my patrons and bought all the white chicks from my eggs and raised them all. A fancier from Boston came up to see them and offered me big money for every one I had, when they ranged from one to seven or eight weeks old; but I said 'Nay; they are not for sale!' I did, however, sell Mr. Houdlette one fine cockerel in the fall, to mate with some white 'sports' that appeared from his laced birds the same season. He pronounced my white chicks a fine lot. I selected the best white cockerel raised that season, named him 'Prince Albus,' mated him to a pen of the best pullets, and began breeding from them in 1887. About 125 chicks were reared from them on my place that season; every one solid white, clean yellow legs and

beaks, red eyes, small combs, fine shape and style. The best birds were carefully selected from matings the following season and bred with improved results; and so on, the third year; adding no new blood until the fourth year. In this way a steady advance was made toward the ideal Wyandotte. This, then, is the simple story of the origin and development of our Prince Albus strain of White Wyandottes. The blood of this strain now mingles in the blood of some of the best developed stock in New England."—Charles L. Powers, Marlboro, Mass.

These statements prove beyond question how some, at least, of our better strains were started. Whether either of these gentlemen above mentioned can claim priority is of no importance to us, but they show plainly the true origin of the White Wyandotte, and establish proof of family lineage. Coming, as they did, from the variety having the most perfect Wyandotte form, they began their career with good form, comb, and color having the proper color of legs, beak, and eye, only needing care and selection in breeding.

Under description of White Plymouth Rocks we make lengthy remarks as to white as a color. The same will apply to all white varieties. In selecting our breeding stock of this variety we should pay more than ordinary attention to head, comb, and eyes. The head of both male and female should be absolutely perfect in form; their combs in perfect conformity to standard demands, and the color of the eyes bright bay. Head, comb, wattles, and ear-lobes count one-fifth of the whole bird under the score-card, and in the guide for cutting for defects eleven of the sixteen rules refer to these sections, showing their great importance in standard qualifications. Bad-shaped

WHITE WYANDOTTE FEMALE

combs and poor-colored eyes descend from parent to offspring most rapidly, showing the vast importance of high quality of these sections upon all breeding stock. Next to these you should have the short, compact shape with as much size as possible. We prefer a fairly full cushion in both male and female, and more fluff than is or should be on Plymouth Rocks. We think the true Wyandotte shape should favor the Cochin more than should be allowed in the Rock family.

There is one fault to be guarded against in all the American breeds and varieties; that is, narrowness between the thighs, causing poor formation of breast and knocked knees, a fault far more injurious than black in plumage. Why any one demands annihilation on account of a few black spots in plumage of a white bird and awards a first prize to a specimen of the same variety that is so narrow between its legs as to allow its hock-joints to almost, or entirely, touch is a problem of considerable importance. The black spots can not scatter injury among its progeny; the ill-formed breast and legs most certainly will. Why we can not all of one accord see past these little pepper-marks of black to things of much greater injury of body and profitable production, is one of the unanswerable problems of the fancy. Shall we sacrifice all to color? is question of more importance than many will admit. We see its injury on all sides.

The Black Wyandottes, like the White, came to us as a sport. Extensive effort went forth through the press to make them a popular fowl. In this country black fowls are not favorites. Prior to the admission of the Black Wyandotte to the Standard an effort was made to breed them pure black with yellow beaks

silver hackle. This pen of 'sports' was from the best and purest stock of Silver Wyandottes in the country. After years of selection and careful mating, I have so improved my strain that they breed true to the essential points, viz.: solid black plumage, dark undercolor, red lobes, smooth dark shanks, correct standard 'rocker' combs, and standard Wyandotte shape and size. My trade in them has grown annually. In plumage the Black Wyandottes are a beautiful glossy, greenish black—not the dull black so often seen in black fowls. For practical value Black Wyandottes are at the front. No breed surpasses them as a fowl for general purposes. As winter layers I have found them the best breed I ever kept. As table fowls those who have 'sampled' them say they are unsurpassed. They are hardy, thrifty, and quick growers, the pullets beginning to lay early. They are excellent for market and especially for broilers. The hens are not too broody, but are first-class sitters and mothers. They are classed among medium-sized breeds, but I have owned hens weighing nine pounds."

The above shows the feelings of their earliest and most ardent admirers. Prior to their admission to the Standard of 1893 all were satisfied to discard the yellow beak and shanks, for the present Standard demand of "black shading into willow or yellow, bottoms of feet yellow." Having stated my opinion as to this feature, in chapter two, I shall give my opinion on producing black plumage, as published in January, 1899, Reliable Poultry Journal:

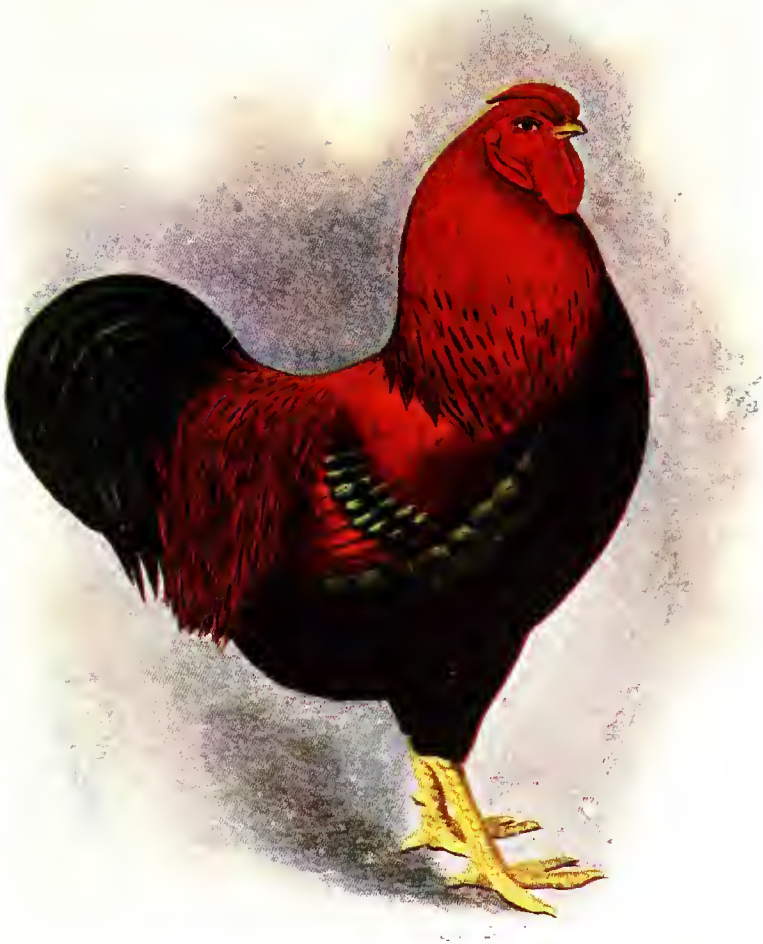
The production of pure black plumage is most difficult, for the greatest danger is that too much color may result. This color to be substantial must carry with it rich black beak, legs, and quills even to the

point of tainting the skin. The quills must be black to the very skin and of a bright, shiny black, neither dull nor brownish; the under-color, flights, and fluff must be free from brownish shade. The legs, like the plumage, must be bright, as dullness detracts from the appearance. In order to produce a true black with any certainty, only rich, true, black-colored birds must be tolerated as breeders, and it is just as well to see that the color of the neck is black to the skin; in fact, that the color of the whole plumage extends well to the skin so as to include the under-color. The less shading or fading at the skin the better. Both male and female must possess that luster which comes from a rich greenish sheen, and this rich greenish sheen must be far more pronounced in the male than in the female. Though the union of these rich colors is very liable to increase in the posterity, not uncommonly resulting in red or bronze necks and wing-bars, it is far less objectionable than white or faded black, and the slaughter of the few specimens showing this excess of coloring will be more than compensated by the beautiful sheen obtained. This excess of color will rarely affect the females to the degree of injury, being far more pronounced in the male birds; but where possessed in moderation, it will be found most useful in reclaiming females showing a tendency to fading and will insure that sheen without which black can not be perfect. The finest black pullets yet produced have come from males showing this rich, bronze-red in necks and wings.

While our aim with the white birds is to eliminate color as much as possible, when breeding black birds we have to contend with the natural tendency to fading, and to avoid this it is well to infuse new

strength in coloring matter from time to time, or whenever we find that the greenish sheen is merging back into dull black. On general principles, it may be dangerous to encourage any of these bad colors in plumage, and especially so in the hands of the novice. But in practice it is found that the proper mating for females lacking somewhat in color, though extra fine in other respects, is to a male with grand color right through to the quills, possessing the bronze-red color in neck and wing-bow. The time may come when perfect specimens can be produced year after year from perfect specimens without suffering any loss in color, but there must first be found some way to arrest the natural deterioration which affects all life, color not excepted; and until then he who strives to maintain a correct medium such as may be termed perfection, without resorting to slight excessive or superabundant color, must be resigned to see others produce the best specimens.

The original Black Wyandottes came as sports from Silver Wyandottes. The pullets came pure black; the first male of which we can find record was black of body and tail, having a silver hackle. By care and selection they were improved into Wyandottes of quality. We find it recorded soon after their admission to the Standard that male specimens scored ninety-five points and females as high as ninety-six. While the score of early days would not stand the search-light of our present demands, it proves their quality as compared with the show specimens of the time, manifesting the work and care bestowed upon them in the efforts to establish Wyandotte qualities.



GOLDEN-PENCILED WYANDOTTE MALE

Wyandottes.

Both the Black and the White Wyandottes began their existence in the household of established breed characteristics, simply needing care in selecting form and color for their perfection.

CHAPTER VI.

Buff Wyandottes.

We presume no one variety has caused so much pen-talk as the Buff Wyandottes. The claimants for the original honors in Northern New York meet with considerable opposition from the Fall River following. We shall endeavor to tell of their conformation as we find it, being guided by the information as gathered by us by word and letter from all sides.

We know absolutely that Mr. Geo. H. Brackenbury, of Auburn, N. Y., had quite advanced in the production of Buff Wyandottes by the use of Buff Cochin blood, as far back as 1890. The so-called Dr. Aldrich production was produced by a cross of Silver Wyandottes upon Rhode Island Reds. The James Forsyth strain originated from Buff Laced sports from Golden Wyandottes for the females mated to males from Dr. Aldrich's stock. It will be noticed that each of these original strains has considerable of the Cochin blood, as they come through the Silver and Golden Wyandotte, also the Brackenbury strain. One has simply to remember the admiration bestowed upon a Wyandotte female of fairly good buff color, having a tendency toward the Cochin shape during their early existence, to be convinced that the Cochin form had the preference, as it should have, it being the proper Wyandotte type.

The Rhode Island Reds that have filled so important a part in the general make-up of both the Buff Wyandotte and Buff Plymouth Rock are largely composed of Asiatic blood, such as the Malay and Shanghai fowls; through them comes the black-red color that

makes so many males like the Brown Leghorn male. The larger portion of the early importations of fowls found their way into Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Rhode Island. The early attention paid by New England to improve agriculture brought to the farmers' attention improved poultry, and this aroused interest brought about the conditions that produced the so-called Rhode Island Reds, as known in their original State, as a single-comb fowl. That was the outcome of miscellaneous unguided crosses upon the farm of specimens of new breeds as they became prominent, upon the farmers' flock of hens. When the agricultural press began to make mention of the high qualities of the Wyandotte fowls the farmers of Rhode Island secured males of this breed to cross upon their favorite fowls. The outcome, fairly good Buff Wyandottes and Buff Plymouth Rocks made to order and awaiting the selection of such experts as Dr. Aldrich and R. G. Buffinton, of Fall River, who understood the value of such quality in the beginning of the formation of the to-be Buff Wyandotte. The careful selection from these flocks formed the foundation for the Buff Wyandottes as they came from Fall River to be advanced and perfected in the hands of the many.

Among the same flock were single-combed fowls of a reddish-buff color, ready made to hand to work great improvement on the Buff Plymouth Rocks as started by Mr. J. D. Wilson, and others. Of these qualities the fanciers of the new buff breeds did not long remain ignorant. General distribution of this blood and the union of all original strains by the exchange of blood lines through purchase have infused almost the same blood into both the Buff Wyandotte

and the Buff Rocks. This is the true reason for the almost identical shape of so many of the females of both breeds. Both the Cochin type and the type having a longer back and less cushion are to be seen in each. The Cochin type should be fostered in the Wyandotte and discouraged in the Plymouth Rock, or else the same type should be selected for both and the wording of the Standard made to conform to the type selected.

Mr. R. G. Buffinton, of Fall River, Mass., writes me under date of June 24, 1899, as follows:

"Buff Wyandottes were produced by crossing Silver Wyandottes with Rhode Island Reds. A friend living near the seashore secured of me some Silver Wyandotte males to run with his flock of hens; the greater portion of same were Rhode Island Reds, as they were called. It was quite difficult to find two of them just alike. All had single combs. It was not his object to produce Buff Wyandottes; he simply wished to improve their laying qualities and secure stock having the rose-comb. In a few years all the farmers in that vicinity had fowls with the rose-comb.

"I had been working to produce a Buff Wyandotte and took a trip into this locality in search for some Rhode Island fowls to help me, and found to my surprise some very good Buff Wyandottes already made. I secured some of the very best of them, bred them for one season, and put them on the market in their crude state. This gives my early connection with the Buff Wyandottes.

"The Buff Plymouth Rock was started in the same section in the same way. I gave them their name and made the first exhibit of them at Providence, R. I.

GOLDEN PENCILED WYANDOTTE FEMALE

Dr. Aldrich secured his stock in the same way, and it is my opinion that all the Buff Rocks and most of the Buff Wyandottes started from the same stock." (Signed) R. G. Buffinton.

Having said so much on buff color in writing of the Buff Plymouth Rock, it is only necessary to say that the same even shade of golden-buff is required for the Buff Wyandotte. It is necessary to see that the shade of color is of the true golden-buff, even and free from all mealiness or foreign color. It will not do to be led away from the true buff by either reddish-buff or lemon-buff that is so very thin in shade as to show white ticking or under-color. The good, clear shade of golden-buff that is laid on so close as to look dense and heavy is the kind that stands the test of time.

Silver Penciled Wyandotte Pullet

CHAPTER VII.

THE ANY-OTHER VARIETY.

The Golden and Silver Penciled, Buff Laced, Violet, and Cuckoo Wyandottes.

The Golden Penciled or Partridge Wyandotte is a new and beautiful variety that is clothed in the colors of the Partridge Cochin. Much contention has arisen as to whom the credit of their origin shall go. Mr. George H. Brackenbury, of Auburn, N. Y., is the one founder and Mr. McKeen, of Wisconsin (deceased) was the other. As Mr. Brackenbury has shown an inclination to give full share of credit to Mr. McKeen, we shall do likewise, both having used almost the same methods in their construction. It is only necessary to say that this variety came from a Golden Wyandotte-Partridge Cochin cross. Some very creditable specimens have been shown and a bright future seems in store for them.

The Silver Penciled Wyandotte is a well-shaped Wyandotte that has the exact colors and markings of the Dark Brahma. The credit of their origin is conceded to Mr. Brackenbury, who has, we presume, done more for these two varieties and the Buffs as well as the others mentioned in the chapter than has any other one man.

The Buff Laced variety is of buff color, having a white lacing on the edge of the feathers much like the feathers on a Buff Laced Polish. These and the Violet are the results of crossing Golden and White Wyandottes and introducing some blue blood. The

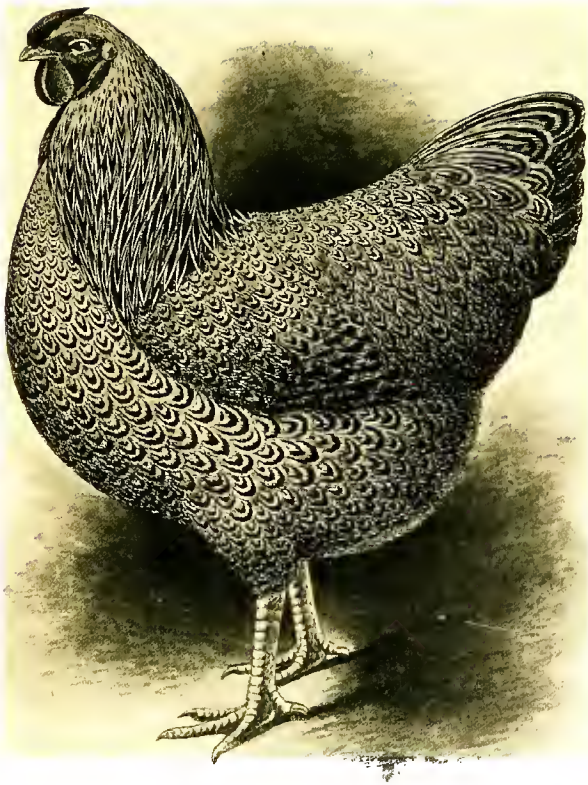
Violet has a ground color like the Golden, edged with a violet-blue color. These interminglings of colors produced solid blues as well. All these fancy markings are the outcroping of the union of so many styles of color and markings.

The Cuckoo Wyandotte or Rose Comb Barred Plymouth Rock might be better called the Pea Comb Plymouth Rock and allowed to take its position in the obsoletes. It might be that limited attention may be given by a few to the fostering of all these styles of color and markings, but beyond this they will hardly advance.

Mr. Ira C. Keller, of Ohio, one of the few who claim to be the originators of some of these many varieties, writes us that he produced his Violet Laced Wyandottes by crossing some solid blue pullets that sported from a pair of Whites with a Golden male bird, thus producing violet lacing upon a golden-bay center. He also states that he produced his Buff Laced from a sport from his Violets that was a fairly good Buff Laced pullet. From these same he reared a trio of the Buff Laced that gave him his foundation stock. By carefully selecting he now has both varieties fairly well under control. The fact that these many shades of color and marking show so perfectly in the crosses made of the several varieties proves the unsettled condition of their breeding and stamps them as belonging to a family of cross-breeds.

Partridge Wyandottes.

This beautiful variety was originated as stated by Messrs. Brackenbury, of New York, and McKeen, of Wisconsin. Many other fanciers throughout the country have done good work in the upbuilding and



Partridge Wyandotte Pullet

completing of the original start. The Eastern or New York strain originated from the intermingling of Partridge Cochin females with Golden Wyandotte males. The product of these united with Golden Penciled Hamburgs and crossing back with the Partridge Cochin blood. The Western strain originated from the Golden Wyandottes and the Partridge Cochin females. While there is some little difference in the two strains, they have been so intermingled as to be all reduced to one line of breeding for best results. We have always been satisfied that the introduction of the Hamburg blood was a mistake and an injury to the Eastern strains. Even at the present day Hamburg markings will crop out.

Partridge Wyandottes are, or at least they should be, perfect Wyandottes in shape and general make-up, the female being colored and marked or penciled to conform to the best color of the Partridge Cochin female. The males to have identically the same color as have the Partridge Cochin males. Shanks and toes and beaks as well should be yellow in color, like other Wyandottes; this, however, is very difficult to obtain. Scarcely one-fourth of all of them have even fairly good colored shanks and feet. We doubt very much if the females of this variety can ever be bred with good colored shanks and toes free from dark shadings so long as the Standard demands the same rich surface color and markings that are preferred for the Partridge Cochins. This calls for mahogany red distinctly penciled with black or brown. If these colors are adhered to, considerable time will have elapsed ere fifty per cent of the females can be produced that will have yellow shanks. Quite a large

per cent of the male birds have good colors, shanks and toes.

In the breeding, or rather in the mating of this variety for best results, one must follow closely the methods made use of for producing the best Partridge Cochins. This is done through the double mating system, which calls for the breeding in line of one strain for producing the rich-colored females, the other for producing the dark-colored male. To be most successful with this, the very richest-colored exhibition females should be mated to males bred in line from the same specimens. This, if followed out, produces the rich exhibition colors for the females; from the same strain the males will be much lighter in top color than are permissible in the exhibition pens. The very darkest-colored males mated to the very dark—in fact, much too dark—colored females produce the richest-colored males. Such colors are the most successful in the exhibition pen, but the crossing of these on the best strains of pullet breeding stock will do great injury to the color and markings of the females.

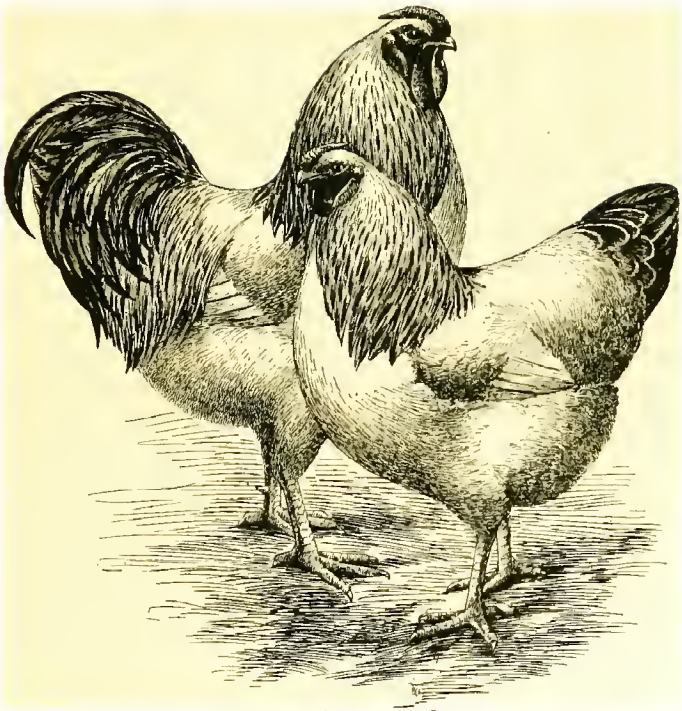
Silver Penciled Wyandottes.

The Silver Penciled Wyandottes have the color and markings of the Dark Brahma. They originated from crossing the Silver Laced Wyandottes with Dark Brahma females and Dark Brahmas with Silver Penciled Hamburgs, and these two united and the best of these selected and bred in line for the best results. The male of this variety must be identical in color with the Dark Brahma male, the female identical with the Dark Brahma female.

The prime essential lies in the beauty and strength of color and marking. A poorly marked or colored specimen of this variety is of but little value; those that are rich in color and markings are most attractive. The greatest care must be used in selecting the very best and pairing them continually year after year, always culling the product so as to be entirely free from the bad markings so frequently seen in the plumage of all the penciled fowls. They have a tendency to be marked on the back much as are the Brown Leghorn females.

With these, as with the Partridge Wyandottes, it is very difficult to obtain clean yellow shanks and feet. The male birds—many of them—have beautiful yellow shanks; many of the females have very bad-colored shanks, and their beaks often so dark as to be almost black. All of these defects should gradually disappear if care and judgment is used in the mating for best results.

Better results can be gained from these under the single mating system than can be obtained with the Partridge Wyandottes under the same methods. It is only necessary to have continually in mind the clean, clear white top-color of the males and the silvery white or, as described, the steel gray distinctly penciled with the darker color, the outline of which follows the shape of the feather. The clear, distinct light gray color without the least appearance of brown shading is the most to be desired color for the Silver Penciled Wyandotte female. The male should have the light top-color distinctly striped in hackle and saddle with black breast and black under-body color. All the black to be a rich, glossy black; the more of the green sheen present in same the better.



Columbian Wyandottes

The Columbian Wyandotte.

These are at present the most prominent of all the non-standard varieties at the present time. They are beautiful Wyandottes that have the color and markings of the Light Brahma. There are many theories advanced as to their origin, but good common sense would lead one to the opinion that the very best way to produce them would be to cross Light Brahmas with White Wyandottes, using the male and female crosses both ways, select the best of these and mate and breed for the most perfect Wyandotte shape and the richest Light Brahma colors.

The weak spots in this variety of Wyandottes is the small size and poor form of the females and the lack of good rich Light Brahma color in them all. They have most beautifully colored shanks and feet and rich yellow skin, which makes them most attractive as table poultry. None of the Wyandottes have this rich golden color to surpass the Columbian variety.

This variety has been shown at a number of meetings of the American Poultry Association, and will more than likely be admitted to the standard in the near future. Quite a number of expert fanciers throughout the country have taken them up and considerable attention is being paid to a general improvement, and an unusual effort is being made to have the very best of Light Brahma color and markings that it is possible to have and maintain a pure white body plumage.

Buff Laced Wyandottes.

The Buff Laced Wyandottes as originally produced in this country was intended to be a Wyandotte having the same colors and markings as our Buff Laced Polish. Mr. Harrison Weir makes a color plate of them as bred in England and names them white—White Laced Red Wyandottes. The colors show them to be much darker in color than are Buff Laced Polish.

In conversation with an English fancier a short time since, when we referred to Mr. Weir's illustration was told that there had been some very handsome Laced Wyandottes shown in England the color of which was such a deep reddish buff as to be almost termed a cherry color, the edge of the feather laced about with white. This variety, like the violets, the cuckoo, and other types of color, have had but very little encouragement in this country.

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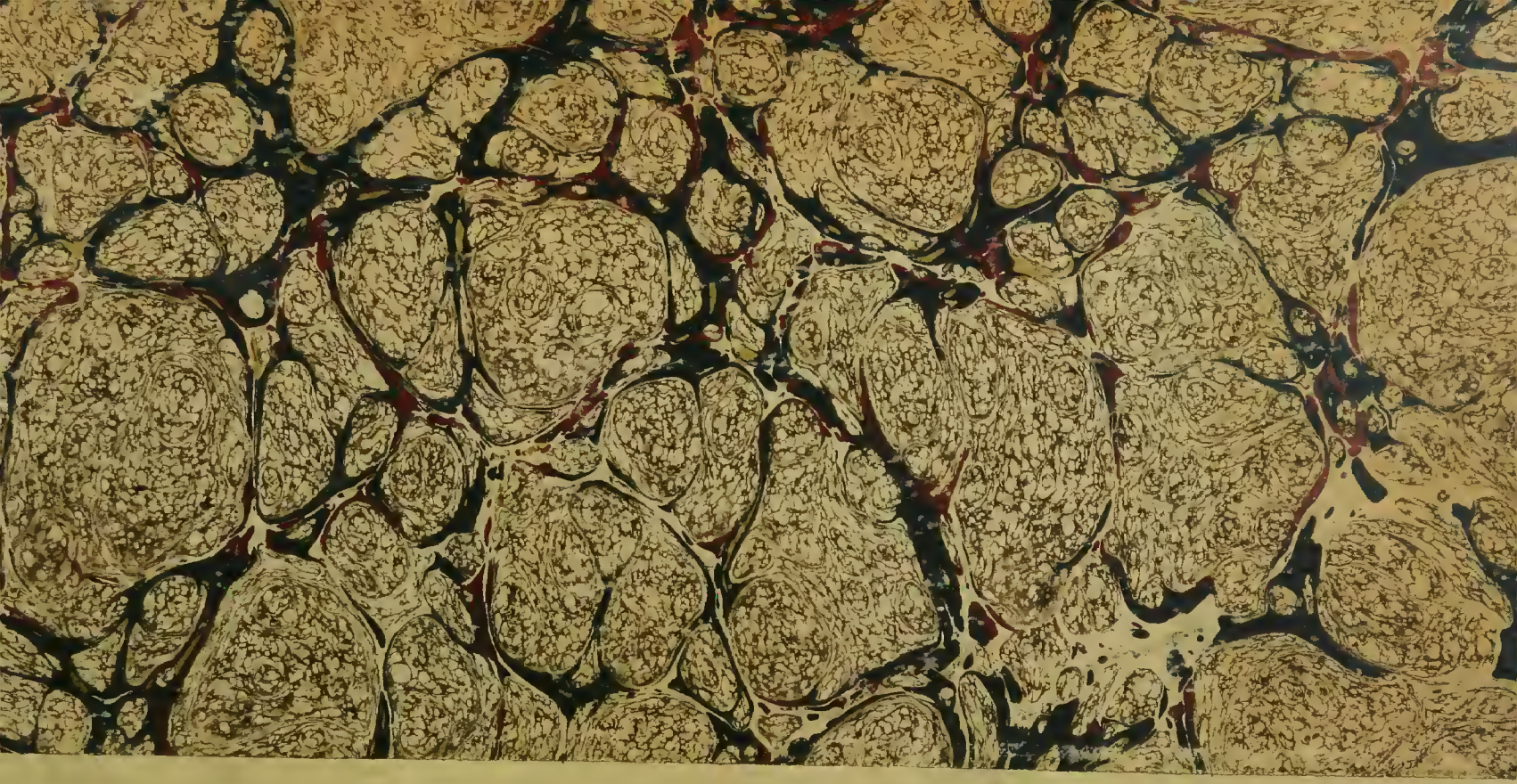
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